Notice to Regional Planning Commissions: **January 22, 2002**

Public Meetings Scheduled for High Speed Rail Study

We are pleased to announce that the first series of public meetings have been scheduled for the Boston to Montreal High Speed Rail Feasibility Study. The meetings are open to the public, and all individuals interested in the future of transportation in the Boston to Montreal corridor are encouraged to attend.

The meetings will start at 6 p.m. with a half-hour open house, followed by the formal presentation beginning at 6:30 p.m. The schedule is:

- Massachusetts: Monday, February 11, 2002 at Gallagher Intermodal Transportation Center at 100 Hale Street in Lowell.
- New Hampshire: Tuesday, February 12, 2002 at the New Hampshire Department of Transportation John O. Morton Building at 1 Hazen Drive in Concord.
- Vermont: Wednesday, February 13, 2002 at the Pavilion Auditorium at 109 State Street in Montpelier.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation in partnership with the State of New Hampshire and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and in conjunction with the Federal Railroad Administration is sponsoring the study. In late 2000, this Boston to Montreal corridor was included as part of one of the nation's three new High Speed Rail Corridors designated by the Federal Railroad Administration. The principal objectives of high speed rail service are to reduce congestion associated with highway and air travel and provide an alternate way to travel.

Phase I of the Boston to Montreal High Speed Rail Study will be focused on developing preliminary service projections, identifying institutional and policy issues, and documenting basic existing infrastructure. The corridor is about 325 miles in length; roughly equal to the Northeast high speed rail corridor between Boston and Philadelphia.

A website has been developed as part of a public outreach campaign to generate interest and identify issues for high speed rail service. The site is located at www.bostonmontrealhsr.org and includes an overview of high speed rail, a description of the corridor, links to other related sites and an up-to-date schedule of the Phase I activities, including future meeting dates.

Scott Bascom of the Vermont Agency of Transportation - project manager for the study – said that the team's public outreach goals are to provide "full coordination and communication with key stakeholders and local communities, a proactive study approach, and thorough identification of potential positive and negative project impacts" in the study process.

The study began in December 2001 and will be completed by September 2002. The study team is led by the consulting firm of Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. of Manchester, NH.

For further information on the study please contact:
Ron O'Blenis, Project Manager
Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc.
75 Arlington Street
Boston, MA 02116
Phone: (617) 960-4920 *Fax: (617) 482-8487*
Email: oblenis@pbworld.com